

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A plasma reactor comprising:
an electrical power supply for applying an alternating or pulsed current;
and
a generating means for generating a plasma from a gas, the plasma having an average current density I_{rd} satisfying the formula $10^{-4} \text{ A/cm}^2 \leq I_{rd} \leq 10^{-1} \text{ A/cm}^2$,
wherein the generating means comprises:
a pair of electrodes facing each other in the longitudinal direction; and
a dielectric material positioned between the pair of electrodes, wherein a first predetermined gap d1 is formed between at least one a first electrode of the pair of electrodes and the dielectric material, and a second predetermined gap d2 is formed between a second electrode of the pair of electrodes and the dielectric material, and
wherein an amount a at the center of the dielectric material in the width direction, is offset from the midpoint of the distance between the pair of electrodes and satisfies the formula
 $0 \leq a \leq 0.5 \times (d1 + d2 / 2)$.

2. (Withdrawn) A plasma reactor comprising a pair of electrodes facing each other, a dielectric material placed between the pair of electrodes wherein a gap is formed between at least one of the electrodes and the dielectric material, and an electrical power supply for applying an alternating or pulsed current to the pair of electrodes, and generating a plasma in a gas passing through the gap between the pair of electrodes to thereby modify the gas, wherein the formulas

$$0.1\text{mm} \leq t \leq 2.0 \text{ mm}$$

$$d + t \leq 5 \text{ mm}$$

$$d / t \leq 5$$

are satisfied when the total size of the gap is d and the thickness of the dielectric material is t .

3. (Canceled)

4. (Canceled)

5. (Withdrawn) A method of determining abnormality in a plasma reactor having a pair of facing electrodes, comprising the steps of applying an alternating current to the electrodes for generating a plasma in a gas passing through the gap between the two electrodes to thereby modify the gas and monitoring the voltage or current waveform on the electrode, wherein the determination of abnormality is based on a change in the waveform of the voltage or current of the alternating current.

6. (Withdrawn) A method of determining abnormality in a plasma reactor according to Claim 5, further including the step of filtering the monitored voltage or current with a high-pass filter, wherein abnormality is determined if a spike-shaped abnormal waveform is detected when the waveform of the voltage or current of the alternating current is filtered by the high-pass filter.

7. (Withdrawn) A method of determining abnormality in a plasma reactor according to Claim 5, further including the step of comparing the waveform of the monitored voltage or current with a reference waveform, wherein abnormality is determined if a spike-shaped abnormal waveform is detected when the waveform of the voltage or current of the alternating current is compared with the reference waveform.

8. (Previously presented) A plasma reactor according to Claim 1 wherein the reactor is adapted to remove exhaust gas emitted from an automobile.